

URGENT ACTION

Spanish National Forcibly Disappeared by Russia

Russian authorities have forcibly disappeared Mariano García Calatayud, a 75-year-old Spanish volunteer humanitarian worker whom their forces had abducted from occupied Kherson, in Ukraine, in 2022. They held him incommunicado, without charges, in occupied Crimea. The last parcel ordered for him in September through the penitentiary service's online system was returned with a note that he was not among the inmates. The Russian authorities now claim that they do not know his whereabouts and claim he had "left Crimea" on June 1, 2023. His life may be in grave danger.

TAKE ACTION:

- Write a letter in your own words or using the sample below as a guide to one or both government officials listed. You can also email, fax, call or Tweet them.
- [Click here](#) to let us know the actions you took on **Second Urgent Action 69.23**. It's important to report because we share the total number with the officials we are trying to persuade and the people we are trying to help.

Krasnov Igor Viktorovich
Prosecutor General of the Russian Federation
ul. Bolshaya Dmitrovka, 15a, str. 1,
GSP-3, Moscow, 125993
Russian Federation

Russian Embassy in the United States
Ambassador Anatoly I. Antonov
2650 Wisconsin Avenue, NW, Washington DC 20007
Email: rusembusa@mid.ru

Dear Prosecutor General,

I am writing to demand the immediate disclosure of the fate, whereabouts, and well-being of **Mariano García Calatayud**, a 75-year-old Spanish volunteer humanitarian worker who was abducted by the Russian forces while they were occupying Kherson, Ukraine, in March 2022. The correspondence between his lawyer and the Russian Black Sea Fleet's Military Prosecutor's Office confirms that for over a year, he was detained without charges, and that as of April 2023, he was held incommunicado in SIZO-2 detention center in Simferopol. However, the last parcel sent in September was returned with a note that he was not among the inmates. A letter from the Prosecutor's Office received by his lawyer and dated December 4, 2023, stated that there was "no information about his whereabouts at present." The letter does not mention that he was released from detention, nor that he "left" Crimea voluntarily, but states that he is not regarded as a missing person.

I am concerned about Mariano García Calatayud's life, and his physical and mental integrity. I am aware that he suffers from a serious heart condition, and that there are credible reports that he has been tortured and otherwise ill-treated in detention by the Russian penitentiary authorities.

I am writing to demand an immediate disclosure of the fate and whereabouts of Mariano García Calatayud, and an end to all other enforced disappearances and illegitimate detentions by Russian forces. I demand Mariano García Calatayud's immediate contact with family and a lawyer of his choice. Finally, I demand a free and safe passage to a destination of his choice.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Mariano García Calatayud, a 75-year-old Spanish citizen, had been working in Ukraine as a volunteer since 2014, delivering humanitarian aid to war-affected children. He remained in Kherson after Russian forces occupied the city in February 2022.

Mariano García Calatayud went missing in Kherson on March 19, 2022, after joining a peaceful protest against the Russian occupation. There are grounds to believe that he was transferred to Russian-occupied Crimea and secretly placed in a detention center. Russian authorities have been holding him incommunicado since, and only acknowledged his detention officially in April 2023 without providing any legal justifications for it. In May 2023, independent Russian media sources published testimonies of former prisoners who confirmed his poor health and claimed they had witnessed Mariano García Calatayud being tortured by prison guards.

According to unofficial reports, such as information from former prisoners or messages passed on by fellow detainees in possession of Russian passports who were allowed visits by their lawyers, he was held in the pretrial detention center No. 1 (SIZO-1) in Simferopol until April 2023. According to the Spain-based Russian lawyer who is representing Mariano García Calatayud's, his client was later moved to the pretrial detention center No. 2 (SIZO-2) in Simferopol. This detention center was reportedly built to house the numerous detainees from the territories occupied by the Russian forces after Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022. Some individuals recently released from Russian detention reported that they had seen Mariano García Calatayud in SIZOs in Simferopol and witnessed his injuries, including those caused by electric shocks and dog bites.

On September 4, 2023, a parcel sent to the Sizo-2 and addressed to Mariano García Calatayud was returned by the penitentiary administration with a message that Mariano García Calatayud was not among its inmates. Mariano García Calatayud's lawyer was informed by two independent sources that he had been transferred to the SIZO in Chonhar, in the Russian-occupied part of Kherson region. However, all attempts to arrange a visit for a meeting with him, or pass him a message, at the pretrial detention center in Chonhar, and other detention centers were unsuccessful. On December 4, the lawyer received a letter from the Russian Black Sea Fleet's Military Prosecutor's Office which stated that Mariano García Calatayud had "left the territory of the Republic of Crimea" and crossed into Kherson region on June 1, 2023, and that the Prosecutor's Office has "no information about his whereabouts at present." This case falls under the pattern of hundreds of civilians from Russian-occupied Ukrainian territories similarly being forcibly disappeared by the Russian authorities or held in incommunicado detention.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: English, Russian, or your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: January 22, 2024

NAME AND PRONOUN: Mariano García Calatayud (He/him)

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/eur46/7012/2023/en/>